

Message Text

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ACTION SS-30

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /031 W
----- 072161

O R 071640Z JUN 74

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2714

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

USINT DAMASCUS

USMISSION GENEVA

USMISSION USUN NY

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 TEL AVIV 3174

EXDIS

GENEVA FOR MEPC DEL

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UN, XF, IS

SUBJ: DISCUSSIONS OF UNSYG WALDHEIM WITH ISRAELI LEADERS

1. SUMMARY. ACCORDING TO ISRAELIS, WALDHEIM VISIT WAS A GREAT SUCCESS FOR BOTH SIDES. WALDHEIM TOLD ISRAELIS GOL WAS SERIOUSLY WORRIED ABOUT FADAYEEN-IDF VIOLENCE BUT NOT ABLE TO ACT AGAINST FEDAYEEN. WALDHEIM REPORTEDLY DID NOT DISPUTE ISRAELI STATEMENT TO HIM THAT IF GOL WOULD NOT ACT, THEN GOI HAD TO DO SO FOR GOL. GOL PARTICIPATION IN GENEVA CONFERENCE AND POSSIBLE CREATION OF UN BUFFER ZONE ALONG LEBANESE-ISRAELI BORDER HAD BEEN DISCUSSED IN BEIRUT INCONCLUSIVELY. WALDHEIM FOUND SYRIANS RELAXED, PLEASED ABOUT DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT, BUT INDISPOSED TO PROLONG UNDOF AFTER SIX MONTHS. RABIN TOLD WALDHEIM HE HOPED UN FORCES WOULD NOT BE REMOVED PREMATURELY. END SUMMARY.

2. PINHAS ELIAV, DIRECTOR OF UN POLITICAL AFFAIRS IN FOREIGN MINISTRY, TOLD US JUNE 7 THAT VISIT OF UNSYG WALDHEIM TO ISRAEL JUN 5-6 WENT EXTREMELY WELL. JUDGING FROM INFORMAL CHATS ELIAV HAD WITH MEMBERS OF UNSYG PARTY, ELIAV THOUGHT WALDHEIM SHARED
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GIO FEELING ABOUT SUCCESS OF VISIT.

3. ELIAV SAID WALDHEIM HAD JOINT MEETING WITH PM RABIN, FM ALLON, AND DM PERES, WHICH DEALT MOSTLY WITH GENERALITIES, AS WELL AS LONG SESSION WITH ALLON AND FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIALS. RABIN OPENED SESSION WITH WALDHEIM BY PRAISING UN CONTRIBUTION TO MAKING ACHIEVEMENT OF EGYPTIAN AND SYRIAN DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENTS POSSIBLE AS WELL AS IMPORTANT AND HELPFUL UN ROLE IN IMPLEMENTING THEM. WALDHEIM, WHO WAS PLEASED BY THIS, SAID (AND LATER REITERATED) THAT HE RECOGNIZED THERE WERE DISTINCT LIMITATIONS ON CONTRIBUTION UN COULD MAKE AND STRESSED THERE COULD BE NO COMPETITION BETWEEN UN'S MULTILATERAL EFFORTS AND UNILATERAL EFFORTS OF POWERS, SUCH AS US. HE SAID HE COULD ONLY GIVE HIS BLESSING TO WORK OF SECRETARY KISSINGER, " WHO ACHIEVES RESULTS."

4. RABIN NOTED TO WALDHEIM, ACCORDING TO ELIAV, THAT JUNE 5 DATE (DAY OF THEIR MEETING) HAD TWO UN SIGNIFICANCES: A) ANNIVERSARY OF OUTBREAK OF 1967 WAR, TO WHICH UN HAD MADE MAJOR CONTRIBUTION BY PULLING OUT UNEF FROM SINAI, AND B) DAY OF SIGNING IN GENEVA OF SYRIAN-ISRAELI IMPLEMENTATION AGREEMENT ON DISENGAGEMENT, TOWARD WHICH UN HAD MADE POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION. RABIN ONLY HOPED UN WOULD NOT PULL OUT ITS FORCES PREMATURELY THIS TIME. WALDHEIM SAID HE WAS QUITE WORRIED ABOUT SYRIAN WILLINGNESS TO HAVE UNDOF EXTENDED WHEN PRESENT SIX-MONTH MANDATE EXPIRED. IN A CASUAL CONVERSATION SYRIAN FM KHADDAM HAD SAID TO WALDHEIM THAT PRESENT SIX MONTHS WAS MAXIMUM SYRIA COULD AGREE TO.

5. IN MEETING WITH ALLON, WALDHEIM SAID HE UNDERSTOOD GOAL POINT THAT WHILE WARMLY WELCOMING UN PEACEKEEPING ROLE UNDER PRESENT MIDDLE EAST ARRANGEMENTS, ISRAEL CONTINUED TO HAVE SERIOUS RESERVATIONS ABOUT UN'S USEFULNESS ON " PARLIAMENTARY ISSUES." WALDHEIM DID NOT SEEM AT ALL HAPPY ABOUT THIRD WORLD ACTIVITIES AT RECENT SIXTH SPECIAL UNGA SESSION. HE SAID THAT SOME AFRICAN GOVERNMENTS LATELY HAD INDICATED THEY WERE HAVING SECOND THOUGHTS ABOUT WISDOM OF THIRD WORLD TACTICS AT UN, AND HE WAS HOPING TO CHANGE AFRICAN UN ATTITUDES DURING HIS FORTHCOMING VISIT TO LUSAKA. (ELIAV NOTED THAT LATER, IN HIS INFORMAL CONTACTS WITH MEMBERS OF WALDHEIM PARTY, HE LEARNED THAT UNSYG'S ASSISTANTS DID NOT SHARE THIS OPTIMISM AND WERE SOMEWHAT SKEPTICAL ABOUT EFFORT WALDHEIM WAS PREPARED TO MAKE TO INFLUENCE AFRICANS AND OTHER THIRD WORLD GOVERNMENTS TO SECRET

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CHANGE THEIR UN TACTICS.)

6. ON LEBANON, ELIAV SAID WALDHEIM REPORTED HE HAD FOUND GOL GENUINELY WORRIED. GOL APPEARED TO WALDHEIM UNABLE TO TAKE MAJOR ACTION TO CONTAIN FEDAYEEN AT THIS TIME AND FEARED MOUNTING IDF REPRISALS AND CONSEQUENT DOMESTIC CRISIS. WALDHEIM DID NOT ARGUE WHEN ALLON--AND ALSO, EARLIER, RABIN--STRESSED TO HIM THAT GOL HAD TO EXERCISE ITS SOVEREIGN

RESPONSIBILITY AND IF IT DID NOT, GOI HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO DO IT FOR GOL. WALDHEIM PARTY MEMBERS TOLD ISRAELIS THEY FEARED "EXPLOSION" SOON IN LEBANON.

7. WALDHEIM SAID QUESTION OF POSSIBLE LEBANESE PARTICIPATION IN GENEVA CONFERENCE WAS UNDER DISCUSSION IN BEIRUT. CHRISTIANS FAVORED IT BECAUSE THEY DID NOT WANT LEBANON LEFT OUT OF FINAL ARRANGEMENTS. MOSLEMS OPPOSED IT BECAUSE IT WOULD COMPROMISE DOCTRINE THAT LEBANON HAD NO STATE OF WAR WITH ISRAEL AND 1949 ARMISTICE AGREEMENT WAS STILL IN FORCE.

8. LEBANESE ALSO RAISED WITH WALDHEIM IDEA OF U-POLICED BUFFER ZONE ALONG ISRAELI BORDER, ELIAV SAID LEBANESE FOREIGN MINISTER TOLD WALDHEIM UNTSO WAS INSUFFICIENT AND ACTUAL UN FORCE WOULD BE NEEDED, IF ZONE WERE CREATED. WALDHEIM TOLD LEBANESE THAT ONLY UNSC COULD DECIDE. WALDHEIM SAID TO ISRAELIS HE DID NOT BELIEVE GOL HAD MADE UP ITS MIND ON BUFFER ZONE QUESTION AND THAT HE PERSONALLY WAS UNENTHUSIASTIC. WHEN ISRAELIS TOLD WALDHEIM SUCH ZONE, IF CREATED AT ALL, COULD ONLY BE ON LEBANESE SIDE OF BORDER, WALDHEIM REPLIED THAT THIS WAS CLEARLY UNDERSTOOD.

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ACTION SS-30

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /031 W
----- 072616

O R 071640Z JUN 74
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2715
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
USINT DAMASCUS
USMISSION GENEVA
USMISSION USUN NY

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EXDIS

9. RE SYRIA, ELIAV SAID WALDHEIM REPORTED HE HAD FOUND DAMASCUS ATMOSPHERE MORE RELAXED THAN YEAR AGO. SYRIANS WERE SATISFIED

WITH DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT. HOWEVER, WALDHEIM TOLD ISRAELIS SYRIAN DETERMINATION TO LIBERATE BALANCE OF GOLAN HEIGHTS COULD AFFECT NEGATIVELY THEIR ATTITUDE TOWARD EXTENDING UNDOF MANDATE SIX MONTHS FROM NOW. ALL SYRIA NEEDED WAS SEVEN UNSC ABSTENTIONS TO BLOCK MANDATE RENEWAL. RENEWAL, AND SURELY USSR, PRC, AND IRAQ WOULD

HELP GET THE SEVEN IF DAMAS ASKED. ELIAV ADDED THAT KHADDAM WAS SOURCE OF ABOVE UN CONCERN, AND ONE OF WALDHEIM'S ASSISTANTS HAD LATER CONFIDED TO ISRAELIS HE (THE ASSISTANT) WAS CONVINCED THAT BALANCING ACT OF ASAD'S SOFT LINE AND KHADDAM'S HARD LINE WAS PUT-UP SHOW FOR BENEFIT OF OUTSIDERS.

10. ELIAV CONTINUED THAT WALDHEIM, ASKING THAT GOI HOLD THIS CLOSELY (ELIAV ASKED THAT USG DO THE SAME), SAID HE HAD RAISED ISSUE OF SYRIAN JEWRY IN DAMASCUS. SYRIANS GAVE HIM "USUAL LINE" ABOUT THEIR BEING NO SYRIAN JEW IN PRISON ON POLITICAL OR SECURITY GROUNDS, ONLY CRIMINAL GROUNDS. ON MURDER OF FOUR SYRIAN JEWISH GIRLS, SYRIANS SAID SARG WAS UPSET OVER EXISTENCE OF GANG COMPRISED OF MOSLEMS AND JEWS ENGAGED IN CURRENCY SUMUGGLING WHICH HAD BEEN RESPONSIBLE.

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1. ELIAV SAID THAT ON OTHER MATTERS, WALDHEIM INDICATED TO ISRAELIS HE WOULD CONTINUE ON HUMANITARIAN GROUNDS TO INVOLVE HIMSELF ON ISSUES OF SOVIET JEWRY PROVIDED HIS ROLE WAS HANDLED DISCRETELY. WALDHEIM THANKED ISRAELIS FOR AGREEING TO AUTHORIZE OVERLAND TRANSIT THROUGH ISRAELI OF POLISH UNITS FROM UNEF TO UNDOF, WHICH HAD SAVED UN MONEY, AND SAID HE RECOGNIZED THIS DID NOT SIGNIFY CHANGE IN ISRAELI POSITION OPPOSING INVOLVEMENT OF UNITS FROM NATIONS HAVING NO RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL. WALDHEIM NOTED HE HAD CONFERRED WITH TWO UN GENERALS WHILE HE WAS IN DAMASCUS AND WANTED TO ENSURE UNDOF WOULD HAVE BEST POSSIBLE COMMUNICATIONS AND TRANSPORTATION. HE CONFERRED ALSO WITH UNTSO COMMANDER IN JERUSALEM AND WANTED UNTSO TO REMAIN IN BEING EVEN THOUGH ITS INDEPENDENT ROLE WAS NOW GREATLY DIMINISHED AND IN FACT CONFINED TO LEBANON.

12. ELIAV SAID WALDHEIM REPORTED SOME PRIVATE AMERICANS HAD COMPLAINED TO HIM ABOUT FEDAYEEN ACTIVITY IN UNRWA CAMPS. HE HAD EXPLAINED UN ONLY PROVIDED SERVICES AT CAMPS AND DID NOT MANAGE OR CONTROL CAMPS. IN LATER CONVERSATION WITH MEMBERS OF WALDHEIM PARTY, ISRAELIS CHALLENGED WALDHEIM ASSERTION RE CAMPS AND RECALLED UN HAD MADE FUSS WHEN IDF HAD CUT PATHS THROUGH UNRWA CAMPS IN GAZA IN 1971. ELIAV ASSERTED UN REPS HAD HAD NO ANSWER TO THIS ISRAELI RIPOSTE.

13. IN CONCLUSION, ELIAV SAID GOI WAS CONFIDENT WALDHEIM HAD BEEN IMPRESSED BY POSITIVE ATTITUDE OF RABIN GOVERNMENT AND WOULD CONVEY FAVORABLE IMPRESSION OF ISRAEL TO EGYPTIANS.

14. COMMENT. ELIAV GAVE US FEELING ISRAELIS THEMSELVES WERE IMPRESSED BY WALDHEIM. ELIAV STRESSED SEVERAL TIMES THAT ISRAELI LEADERS VIEW WALDHEIM AS VERY SENSIBLE AND COMPETENT UNSYG, AS HAVING APPROPRIATELY MODEST IDEAS ABOUT UN ROLE IN MIDDLE EAST, AND AS HAVING SURROUNDED HIMSELF WITH EXCELLENT PEOPLE, " ESPECIALLY URQUHART AND SIILASVUO." VELIOTES

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: SECRETARY GENERAL, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION, MILITARY OCCUPIED AREAS, MUTUAL FORCE WITHDRAWALS, INTERNATIONAL PEACEKEEPING FORCES, VISITS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 07 JUN 1974
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: smithrj
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974TELAV03174
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740146-0464
From: TEL AVIV
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740663/aaaacccm.tel
Line Count: 231
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: smithrj
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 17 JUN 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <17 JUN 2002 by kelleyw0>; APPROVED <25 FEB 2003 by smithrj>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: DISCUSSIONS OF UNSYG WALDHEIM WITH ISRAELI LEADERS
TAGS: PFOR, XF, IS, UN, UNTSO, (WALDHEIM, KURT)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005